

CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method of making a bending wave panel loudspeaker, comprising:

rigidly coupling a lever to a panel ~~edge or~~ marginal portion to define a region where a suspension can be attached and ~~such that~~ wherein the lever extends at an angle to the plane of the panel,

coupling a bending wave exciter to the lever whereby bending wave energy is coupled to the panel to provide an acoustic output when the exciter is fed with a signal and

supporting the panel on a suspension positioned outboard of the lever in said region with said suspension being adapted to provide boundary conditions which improve performance.

2. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, comprising arranging the lever to be in the form of a flange extending along ~~the panel edge or along~~ a marginal portion of the panel.

3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 2, comprising arranging the flange to extend part-way along the ~~panel edge or~~ marginal portion ~~or to be co-extensive with the panel edge.~~

4. (currently amended) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, comprising arranging levers or flanges on a pair of opposite ~~edges or~~ marginal portions of the panel, and coupling each lever or flange to a vibration exciter whereby the bending wave panel can be operated as a stereo device.

5. (currently amended) A method according to claim 4, comprising arranging a lever or flange on an adjacent ~~edge or~~ marginal portion of the panel, and coupling a vibration exciter to the lever or flange on the adjacent edge or marginal portion to provide a multiple channel acoustic output.

6. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, comprising driving the lever or flange into resonance by the associated vibration exciter.

7. (previously presented) A method according to claim 6, comprising selecting a distributed mode device as a vibration exciter.
8. (previously presented) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, comprising positioning the exciter inboard of the lever or flange.
9. (previously presented) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, comprising applying force to the lever or flange via the vibration exciter generally in the plane of the panel.
10. (previously presented) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, comprising applying force to the lever or flange via the exciter generally normally to the plane of the panel.
11. (original) A method according to claim 10, comprising providing the lever or flange with a return lip at its end remote from the panel, and coupling the vibration exciter to the return lip.
12. (previously presented) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the bending wave panel is driven into resonance by the or each exciter.
13. (original) A method according to claim 12, wherein the resonance is of the distributed mode kind.
14. (currently amended) A bending wave panel-form loudspeaker having:
 - a panel;
 - a lever rigidly coupled to a marginal portion ~~or edge~~ of the panel to define a region where a suspension can be attached,
 - a vibration exciter coupled to the lever to apply bending wave energy to the panel to produce an acoustic output and
 - a panel suspension positioned outboard of the lever in said region with said suspension being adapted to provide boundary conditions which improve performance.
15. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to claim 14, wherein the lever is in the form of a flange extending along the ~~panel edge or along~~ a marginal portion of the panel.

16. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to claim 15, wherein the flange extends part-way along the ~~panel edge or marginal portion or is co-extensive with the panel edge~~.
17. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein levers or flanges are provided on a pair of opposite ~~edges or~~ marginal portions of the panel, each lever or flange being coupled to a vibration exciter whereby the loudspeaker may be operated as a stereo device.
18. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to claim 17, wherein a lever or flange is provided on an adjacent ~~edge or~~ marginal portion of the panel, the lever or flange on the adjacent ~~edge or~~ marginal portion being coupled to a vibration exciter to provide a multiple channel acoustic output.
19. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the lever or flange is adapted to be driven into resonance by the associated vibration exciter.
20. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 19, wherein the vibration exciter is a distributed mode device.
21. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the exciter is placed inboard of the lever or flange.
22. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the vibration exciter is adapted to apply force to the lever or flange generally normal to the plane ~~thereof of the panel~~.
23. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the vibration exciter is adapted to apply force to the lever or flange generally in the plane of the panel.
24. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to ~~claim 23~~ claim 22, wherein the lever or flange comprises a return lip at its end remote from the panel, and wherein the vibration exciter is coupled to the return lip.

25. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the bending wave panel is adapted to be resonant to produce an acoustic output.

26. (original) A loudspeaker according to claim 25, wherein the bending wave panel is of the distributed mode kind.

27. (previously presented) A small electronic device having a display screen, and a transparent protective cover over the display screen, wherein the transparent protective cover is a loudspeaker as claimed in any one of claims 14 to 16.

28. (original) A small electronic device according to claim 27, wherein the device is a mobile telephone, PDA or the like.

29. (new) A bending wave panel-form loudspeaker having:

a panel;

a lever rigidly coupled to an edge of the panel, said lever having a return member extending generally parallel to the plane of the panel at its end remote from the panel;

a vibration exciter coupled to the return lip of the lever to apply bending wave energy to the panel to produce an acoustic output; and

a panel suspension positioned outboard of the lever.